



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE SCHOOL REVIEW

A JOURNAL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

VOLUME V
NUMBER 5

MAY, 1897

WHOLE
NUMBER 45

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY IN THE HIGHER SCHOOLS OF GERMANY

"It has to be remarked," says Comenius, "that in every class, history, as the eye of life, should find a place, so that all that is most memorable in the past, both in deed and word may be known. This, so far from increasing the burden on pupils, will lighten their labors. Little text-books should be written, viz., one on biblical history; one on natural things; one on inventions and mechanical arts; one exhibiting the most illustrious examples of virtue; one on the various customs of nations; and, finally, one containing all that is most significant in the history of the world and especially of our own country."

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the high regard in which the study of history was held both by Luther and Melanchthon, no serious attempt was made to introduce it into the secondary schools before the time of Comenius. The Jesuits were early impressed with the correctness of Comenius' ideas and gave history a place in their curriculum. Others, notably Francke and Leibnitz, did something for the teaching of history in the secondary schools, but so little time was given to the subject that the work degenerated into the mere memorizing of historical facts. Frederick the Great, in the truly rationalistic spirit, severely criticised the pedagogues of his day for stuffing the memories of the pupils, giving no heed whatsoever to the development of the powers of judgment. In his instructions to the Berlin *Ritterakademie* (1765) he said: "It is no longer permis-

sible for a young man who will live in the great world not to know the events which belong in the chain of European history." In his opinion a knowledge of the history of the classical world was of little value without the ability to apply it to modern conditions. The immediate outcome of the rationalistic movement was a change in the method of treating history, as well as a decided increase (four to six hours) in the number of week-hours devoted to the study. In the upper classes of some schools the method now frequently recommended could be found even then in actual operation. A whole semester, and in some instances an entire year, was devoted to an intensive study of special topics.

At the beginning of the present century when things were shaping for the subsequent development of the German school system the influence of F. A. Wolf was such as to retard the study of history. In his opinion nothing should be taught in a *Gymnasium* that did not serve directly as a preparation for the learned professions. Little can be gained from a study of modern history, he urges, that does not tend to narrow and pervert a young man's judgment. Mediæval history can contribute little because the events of that period are not such as to elevate or inspire. In fact ancient history is the only history of any value because in it we learn of the motives and acts of the greatest people the world has ever seen, of the causes that made them great and of the errors which brought about their ruin. Such knowledge must be not only a desirable but also an essential element in a well-rounded education. With Herbart history received a prominent place in the curriculum. He considered a knowledge of what man has done and suffered, of what he has tried to do and the reasons for his failures, as the surest means of rousing a pupil's interest in the past and inspiring him with lofty sentiments. History becomes, therefore, a study of particular value. Its object is not only intellectual but moral development. Old Testament history deserves a place beside that of Greece and Rome. Schleiermacher, too, called history the picture-book of ethics.

It will be seen that in the humanistic schools, where the chief end of education was a familiarity with classic authors, and where the whole course of training was purely formal, there was no place for history. But with the introduction of realistic notions through Locke, Comenius, and Rousseau, together with the utilitarian ideas which characterized the period of enlightenment, the study of history and geography was recommended for its practical worth. "A man," said Frederick the Great, "who does not imagine himself fallen from heaven, who does not date the history of the world from the day of his birth, must be curious to know what has taken place in all ages and in all lands." But neither Frederick the Great nor the educators of his time believed that a mere knowledge of useful facts is the chief end of the study of history. On the contrary it was held that the study of history offers the best opportunity for the development of the discriminative judgment. Properly presented it teaches the pupil to pass over the unessential and fasten upon the important links in the chain of causes. It affords scope for common-sense comparison and aids in the formation of judgments which have a practical bearing upon the affairs of everyday life. History has never been so strongly emphasized as in the latter half of the eighteenth century. In the opinion of Von Zedlitz, Minister of Education under Frederick the Great, six or seven hours a week were not too much time to give to historical studies. With the reorganization of the Prussian school system at the close of the Napoleonic wars three hours a week were assigned to history and geography (programme of 1816). As the schools came more and more under the influence of the humanistic leaders, and education became increasingly formal, history fell into the background—if not in theory at least in practice. As taught in the schools it amounted to little more than sketches of military campaigns and the memorizing of dates.

The new Prussian *Lehrplan* of 1892 lays great stress upon the language, literature and history of Germany. These must be the center to which all else tends. The secondary schools are

looked upon as the mainstay of the throne, and the supreme authority has declared that these schools shall turn out patriotic citizens. To this end nothing should be left undone to give the youth of the fatherland a critical insight into the history of the German Empire. As Goethe puts it, the best that we get from history is the enthusiasm which it arouses. With this in mind the education department of the Prussian government has set a new stamp on the educational value of history. It is held to be of worth primarily for its ethico-religious influence in the development of character.

Granted that history shall have a place in the curriculum, what kind of history should it be—political history? or something more comprehensive? national or general history? Obviously the gymnasial policy has been to consider political history as of little worth in comparison with the broader and more comprehensive history of civilization, and national history as narrow and one-sided when viewed in the light of general history. Prior to the reform of 1892, the secondary schools of Prussia accepted history as an end in itself without reference to its practical bearing in the training of citizens. "The object of historical instruction in the *Gymnasium*," according to the rescript of 1882, "is to arouse in the pupils respect for the moral greatness of individual men and nations, to make them conscious of their own imperfect insight, and to give them the ability to read understandingly the greatest historical classics." The *Lehrplan* of 1892 brings prominently to the front the necessity of understanding the events in German and Prussian history. It is the national history rather than the universal which is emphasized: the political which has culminated in a new and regenerated German Empire, rather than the general which deals with the salient points in the progress of civilization.

It shows clearly the determination of the government to make use of the schools in stemming the tides of socialism and liberalism. History is to be taught not altogether as a means for intellectual training, nor as an essential part of a liberal

education, nor yet as an independent science, but preëminently with a view to the making of patriotic citizens.

The new syllabus also shows a change in the arrangement of the course in history. Formerly there were two years of mythology and biography in the first part of the course, beginning with the legendary history of Greece and coming down to the early history of Germany. The new *Lehrplan* provides that in *Sexta* scenes from the national history shall be described, beginning with the events which are closely related to the pupils' own environment and working from the present back into the past. This regression continues throughout the first year and in *Quinta* it reaches the legendary history of Greece and Rome. The chief events of Grecian history to the death of Alexander the Great and of Roman history to the death of Augustus are taken up in the following year (*Quarta*). In *Untertertia* the chronological order is followed to the end of the Middle Ages. *Obertertia* continues the work to the accession of Frederick the Great with special reference to the history of Brandenburg. *Untersecunda* fills out the course to the present time. Up to this point the course is the same for both six-year and nine-year schools. The three upper grades of the latter begin again with an intensive study of Grecian and Roman history in *Obersecunda*, of the mediæval and modern history to the end of the Thirty Years' War in *Unterprima*, and of the later developments down to the present time in *Oberprima*.

The introduction of the *Abschlussprüfung* at the end of *Untersecunda* determined the allotment of the work in the middle and upper grades. The course as a whole, however, has thereby been cut up into three distinct parts: the first of these proceeds from the present back to the legendary history of the Greeks; the second begins with early Grecian history and traces the causal series, so far at least as the German people are concerned, down to the present; the third is but a larger circle drawn around the other two.

Teachers of history who believe in maintaining a strict continuity and who think that the explanation of present events is

to be sought in causes lying in the past have no faith in the manner of treatment suggested for the first and second years in the Prussian course; and least of all will they tolerate the division in the courses at the end of the first six years. Another class of educators is unalterably opposed to the allotment of only two years to ancient history, one year of which (*Quarta*) is at the very beginning of the true historical course. Furthermore it has been pointed out that, inasmuch as the leaving examinations are based solely upon the work of *Untersecunda* and *Oberprima* respectively, no direct tests can be made of scholars' attainments in either Grecian or Roman history, and that this applies no less to the *Gymnasien* than to the *Real-schools*.

Prussia may change her course of study as often as she pleases; she may dictate what shall be taken up in each class, but she cannot change the views of her teachers by a ministerial rescript. To all appearances the new order has served to introduce only confusion into the history teaching of most schools. The veterans educated and trained under the old dispensation are not anxious, as a rule, to adapt themselves to the new requirements which have all the appearance of using the teachers as props for bolstering up the throne. I regret to say that I was unable to find in any Prussian school what might be considered as a typical illustration of the Prussian programme. Furthermore very few of the German states have followed Prussia's lead in the matter of teaching history.

There are those who maintain that the Emperor's idea of making the special aim of historical study the fostering of a national spirit, while in theory perfectly correct, is nevertheless pedagogically shortsighted. They maintain that patriotism should be more than mere enthusiasm, more enduring than the frothy exuberance of spirits that arises from the contemplation of great deeds; that love of country and of king depends upon a firm and unchangeable character. It follows, therefore, that character-building must at least go hand in hand with the development of the patriotic spirit. The best representatives of this school are unquestionably the Herbartians.

The lamented Dr. Frick, of Halle, untiringly advocated more rational methods in the teaching of history. Probably no man in Germany has done more than he in working out a course of study closely correlated with the work in German, the classical languages, geography and religion. He had great influence in the Berlin conference, and his views were largely instrumental in effecting some of the more important changes there made. It is to be regretted, however, that other interests interfered with the complete expression of his views.

The teaching of geography in the German schools has become a highly perfected art. I am not sure but geography is the best taught subject, on the whole, of all the subjects of the curriculum. At any rate one sees less of offensive formalism and more of intelligent freedom in the treatment of geographical topics than in almost any other sphere. In its present form geography is a very modern subject. It took its rise from Karl Ritter, who acknowledged his indebtedness to Pestalozzi for suggestions as to natural methods of teaching. And from that day to this there has been no lack of university instruction for the teachers of the secondary and normal schools. The influence of a few such men as Ratzel, of Leipsic; Kiepert, of Berlin; Kirchhoff, of Halle; and Sievers, of Giessen—all of them interested in the training of teachers—is sufficient to give geography a high rank in the schools.

But geography, so far as it has to do with the earth as the abode of man, is inseparable from history. And in the secondary schools of Germany history and geography keep even step. Except possibly in the first two years of the course, geography is nowhere an independent study in the higher schools. The study of topography and of political and commercial geography and the drawing of maps are closely correlated with the work in history. The general truths of mathematical and physical geography which have no direct bearing upon the events of history are taught incidentally, one might say, in the lower grades. On the other hand the more important facts of physical geography, meteorology and geology are generally carefully

expounded in the best German schools as a partial explanation of political and social conditions. It is for this reason that in nearly all secondary-school programmes of Germany, history and geography are classed together as a single subject. In so doing, to be sure, geography loses some of the characteristics which would naturally place it among the natural sciences, but as the object both in history and geography is not so much to develop an accurate scientific knowledge of these subjects as the formation of certain habits of thought and feeling the correlation is a distinct gain for both studies. The union is made still closer by placing the instruction of both in the hands of the same teacher.

As a typical example of those schools in which history and geography seem to have a place commensurate with their value as an educational means, and in which the problems of historical and geographical teaching are being solved in the best pedagogical manner, I select the *Gymnasium* of Jena. The *Director* of the school, Dr. G. Richter, was an intimate friend of Dr. Frick and for several years co-editor with him of the *Lehrproben und Lehrgänge* in which some of the best pedagogical work of the secondary schools has been published. Dr. Richter, however, is more than an expounder of the views which have made Dr. Frick famous. He has associated with him in his school faculty several able young men who are in entire accord with the Herbartian views as modified by Drs. Frick and Richter. It is to their united efforts that success is due.

The programme for history and geography in the first two classes of the Jena *Gymnasium* is as follows:

SEXTA: *History and German*, 3 hours. Stories from the Odyssey and selections from German legendary history. *Geography*, 2 hours. (a) Simple geographical notions to be gained from Jena and the surrounding country. Eleven excursions to various points of interest in the neighborhood. (b) Thuringia — (1) The map; (2) course of the Saale as far as Halle; (3) Ilm; (4) Unstrut; (5) Elster; (6) Werra as far as Eschwege; (7) Itz; (8) Railroads. Chief topics: elevations, climate,

products, industry, trade, religion and political divisions. Throughout the entire year observations of the temperature, winds, position and movements of the sun and moon, all of which are entered in a notebook.

QUINTA: *History and Geography*, 4 hours. (a) German mythology and history, chiefly Thuringian; selections of typical scenes. With the extension of the history proceeds the gradual development of the geography until it includes all Germany. Map-drawing, at first of Germany, then a gradual extension to all other European countries.

The Jena programme of the work for the first two classes differs from the Prussian syllabus in that comparatively little attention is given to classical mythology. In fact, stories from the *Odyssey* are about all that are not German. In *Sexta* there is very little of what could be called under any stretch of imagination historical work, and, contrary to the Prussian plan, the entire time of *Quinta* is devoted to a systematic description of the chief events in German history.

In *Sexta* the geographical instruction is particularly interesting. The *Gymnasium* is situated on ground once occupied by the city walls. The broad street now separating the old city from its modern suburbs gives a starting point for a map of the town. It is linked, too, with historical associations that easily arouse the interest of the pupils. Pictures of the old town before the walls were removed are still to be had. An occasional watch-tower yet remains standing as a monument of former times. A few minutes' walk brings the teacher with his class to one of a dozen points of interest in the town. The River Saale with its tributaries can be traced for fifteen or twenty miles from the heights. The location of a dozen villages can be indicated on the map as a result of a single excursion to a neighboring hill-top. In fact, the excursions which are always made by teacher and pupils during this first year furnish the fundamental concepts necessary at the beginning of geographical study, and the observations taken day by day of the movements of heavenly bodies, fluctuations in temperature, and changes of the wind, are

the basis of all future work in mathematical geography and meteorology.

The work of *Quinta* is divided into some thirty or forty topics, the most of which can be centered about some illustrious man or great event. These embrace a description of the Cimbri and Teutons, their subjugation and liberation; stories of Drusus, Germanicus and Armin, together with the geography of western Germany; the Slavic invasions of eastern Germany; the coming of the Christians; Charlemagne and his times; the building of the Wartburg; the Crusades; great Thuringian rulers; founding of the universities; Hussites in Thuringia and the Reformation; the Thirty Years' War; Brandenburg and Prussia; Karl August, Goethe, and Schiller; Napoleon, and the battles of Jena and Leipsic; Stein, Blücher, and Scharnhorst; the new German Empire; Wilhelm I, Bismarck, and Moltke.

The Jena *Gymnasium* is peculiarly fortunate in having some of the best teachers which it has ever been my privilege to hear. The younger members of the faculty in particular have given much time and labor to the development of rational methods in the teaching of history and geography. In the lower grades a typical recitation begins with a review of such parts of previous lessons as may be necessary for the proper understanding and assimilation of the topic about to be presented. From five to ten minutes of the hour may pass in this way. Then comes the narration of the new story with particular emphasis upon certain important events, personages and dates. As the teacher proceeds with the story he develops an outline on the board which he has previously carefully prepared. As he places this upon the board, point by point, the pupils enter it into their notebooks. Historical pictures are freely used to bring out clearly references made to the military, social, family, or industrial life of the times.

This use of illustrative material, be it said, is more common in German schools than in American. It may be in a large measure due to the lamentable fact that we in America are at a serious disadvantage in this respect. Our pictures, charts and

maps are decidedly inferior to the German in point of accuracy, execution and artistic merit. The German teachers of *Sexta* and *Quinta* have at command an elaborate series of pictures and charts illustrating almost every phase of national life from the earliest times to the present. What cannot be obtained by reproduction of famous works of art is supplied in the form of ideal illustrations executed in accordance with the best scholarship obtainable.

The pedagogical value of such use of pictures in class work, as Germans maintain, is very great. It is said that the child living in the present and thinking in the terms of the present is unable to adjust himself to the past without great efforts of the imagination. It is peculiarly the function of pictures to assist the mind of the child in grasping the real significance of past events. They are of particular importance, too, in the teaching of geography. At first the child acquires a store of geographical ideas from observation of his local environment. The moment he is asked to go beyond his actual experience he must draw upon his imagination. It is too much to assume that he will grasp the full significance of geographical facts which are totally unconnected with anything already known; but pictures properly executed may be of the greatest service in the development of the constructive imagination provided care be taken that the child interpret correctly what the picture presents.

In the presentation of the lesson the teacher will of necessity often be obliged to consider the topography of the country in which the scene of the story is laid. This involves an elaboration of the geographical knowledge of the class. It may happen that a halt must be called in the development of the historical side in order that maps of the region may be drawn and the physical characteristics of the country carefully studied. In general it is expected that the equivalent of one or two hours a week will be given to this phase of the work during the first four or five years of the course. If no such interruptions are necessary the teacher will give not more than half of the hour to the presentation of new material.

The next step in the lesson is the oral reproduction by the

pupils of what has just been told them according to the outline as it stands before them on the board. No one who has observed this part of the recitation in the Jena *Gymnasium* can fail to be impressed with the intense interest manifested by the pupils as shown in their eagerness to tell what they know and to discuss its consequences.

There is a life and vigor to be found here, which, I regret to say, I rarely saw elsewhere. One pupil begins to tell the story and at a convenient resting point he is succeeded by another and so on in regular order until perchance some wrong impression calls up a more general class discussion. Whenever an important name or date occurs the pupils rise and repeat it in concert; thus the attention of all is fixed more closely upon the topical outline of the lesson.

It would hardly be doing the Hebartian teacher justice to say that the oral reproduction is the final step of the lesson. He would certainly consider his work very much of a failure if in addition to proper preparation and presentation he did not proceed to generalize and to make application of the truth of the lesson to the everyday life of the scholars. A Jena teacher will rarely fail in this respect. The lesson is a work of art.

JAMES E. RUSSELL

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO,
Boulder, Colo.

(To be concluded.)